1.0 The Manifesto of Rumpelization

Issued by the International Society for Advanced Rumpel Studies (membership currently under review).

For too long, art has been imprisoned by accuracy.

For too long, painters have measured noses, aligned eyes, and obsessed over such tyrannical concepts as "proportion" and "likeness."

Rumpelization rejects these constraints.

Rumpelization is not the failure to achieve realism.

It is the deliberate liberation of reality from its unnecessary details.

Where traditional portraiture asks, "Does this look like the subject?"

Rumpelization asks, "Does the subject deserve to look like the subject?"

1.1 Article I: The Sacred Distortion

Every face contains a hidden truth.

Unfortunately, that truth is often buried beneath anatomy.

The Rumpelist removes these distractions.

An ear may migrate.

A forehead may expand.

A chin may become an independent political entity.

These are not mistakes.

They are revelations.

1.2 Article II: The Triumph of Recognition

A successful Rumpelization exists in a state of paradox.

The viewer must immediately recognize the subject while simultaneously wondering what catastrophe has occurred.

If the audience says:

"I know exactly who that is, but I have several questions,"

the work has succeeded.

1.3 Article III: The Rejection of Perfection

Perfection is sterile.

Perfection is predictable.

Perfection is what computers do.

Rumpelization celebrates the trembling hand, the misplaced pixel, the accidental brushstroke, and the mysterious shape that appeared halfway through the painting and refuses to leave.

Especially the mysterious shape.

1.4 Article IV: The Principle of Escalation

When faced with a questionable artistic decision, the Rumpelist must not retreat.

The Rumpelist must continue.

If an eye appears too large, make the other eye larger.

If a shadow looks strange, deepen it.

If the painting begins to resemble a witness sketch from a supernatural crime, proceed confidently.

History favors the committed.

1.5 Article V: The Cult of Character

A photograph records appearance.

A Rumpelization records presence.

The objective is not to capture what a person looked like on a particular day.